

**Education Governance Responses
Canaan Meeting (4/9/07) - Canaan High School**

29 Attendees (facilitated by George Appenzeller)

Question #1: What are the advantages and disadvantages of the present education governance system in your community?:

Advantages

More local control
Less travel costs
More sense of community
More interaction between teachers & students
Small already
Not as many board meetings as others
Only one school
Freedom of choice for smaller towns for where children go to school
Smaller towns without a school have own board – a voice
Local pride in our children
The school becomes community center
Convenient, responsive, good service
Personal contact
Superintendent right in the office
Access to board
Know the kids

Disadvantages

Freedom of choice = lower numbers, tuition for Canaan schools
Loss of local control
Travel
Cost of mandated services
Cost of upkeep of buildings
Travel time to conferences & courses for teachers
Too many boards for a district with one school & too many meetings
It is unclear to whom the superintendent is accountable
Structure of ENSU board is not clear
Fewer resources (personnel expertise) due to isolation
Geography – difficult to consolidate resources
Budget expense of salary for Supt. (Canaan bears most burden) per pupil spread out
Don't inter-operate with New Hampshire
People not running for office

Question #2: What are the advantages and disadvantages of the school district model suggested by Commissioner Cate in his White Paper?

Advantages

More efficient
Less travel
Fewer meetings

Shared curriculum
Staffing & student arranged more efficiently
Bigger pool of applicants for fewer superintendent's job
Same policies
Down size – restructure
Cut down costs of administration
Act faster on problems
More streamlined to have one board – efficient, easily accessed
State-wide, there could be a huge cost savings that could create an even more equitable education for our students.
Canaan is an independent district.

Disadvantages

Large meetings – school district meeting
What happens to freedom of choice for schools?
How is representation set up for the district boards?
Loss of local control on votes, issues for individual towns
Board of approx. 9-11, difficult to come to consensus
Unknown financial tax rate. One grand list?
Difficulty finding board members
Salary for Super.
Which district would we be incorporated with? Would we have input on which district we would incorporate with?
Still costly for Canaan.
New plan does not address the question of educational equity/opportunity
Still too much money in administration costs
Teachers are not included in the new model
Canaan is an independent district

Debrief Comments:

Fund mandates
Less paperwork
Get rid of Gold Towns
Can we have a part-time superintendent?
Can we combine with another supervisory union?
We should have a superintendent who is also a teacher/curriculum coordinator/or technology coordinator.
Does the central office need 3 full-time positions to administer 260 students & 30 teachers?
Administrative resources, jobs, personnel, need to be restructured & streamlined
Local input
Parent & townspeople involvement should be the over-riding factor in how our children are educated.
Would students be able to choose where they could attend school?
Who should control Vermont schools?
Is present system broken?
Will it save us money?
Problem with proposal – towns who tuition their kids elsewhere could still vote down the budget
Canaan/ENSU wouldn't change (much)

Would be an advantage to not have choice – could count those students

Why fix it?

Current governance costs money that could be used a better way.

Like the idea of reusing existing small schools differently rather than closing them (ex. K-2 in one; 3-6 in another)

If ENSU won't change for us, why support it? Answer: State-wide it will make a difference.

The changes could happen without governance change.